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ASHBACK

iving the Past for the Future

Volume 52

Spring 2002

Number 2

Sarah Ridge



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WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Washington County Historical Society

118 East Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701

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FLASHBACK

Preserving the Past for the Future

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FIGHTING CHARLIE REESE TO THE FIGHTING RAZORBACKS

By Dr. Nancy Hendricks

How could a North Carolina Revolutionary War hero known as "Fighting Charlie" launch a chain of events which would ultimately lead not only to the oldest house in Fayetteville, Arkansas, but also arguably the athletic powerhouse known as the Arkansas Razorbacks?

The story begins with a baby born in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina - even before our country was born.

According to family tradition, David Reese had married Susan Polk in 1737 or 1738. Susan is said to be of a Scotch-Irish family that began emigrating from Ulster in the 1670's. Before coming to the new colonies in America, David is said to have been born in 1710 in Wales, probably descending from those of the Welsh spelling of the family name, "Rhys." His family is said to have landed in Delaware and then made their way to Pennsylvania.

In late 1755 or early 1756, Charles Reese was born a few years after his parents had migrated to Mecklenburg County in western North Carolina about 1753. The sparsely populated region was a popular destination for the trains of Conestoga wagons which made their way from Pennsylvania in what was called the Great Philadelphia Wagon Trail through the Shenandoah Valley. Baby Charles started life in the bucolic Piedmont area of the Carolina colony.

As he grew up, however, the child earned his nickname of "Fighting Charlie" - apparently he just loved to fight! In Mary E. Reese's *Genealogy of the Reese Family*, she says: "He [Charles Reese] was inclined to be wild, and gave his family much trouble."

By 1776, when Charlie was age 20, he found plenty to fight for. He volunteered in the American Revolution along with family and neighbors from Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, who strongly supported the American cause. In 1775, Charlie's father had been a signer of the rebellious Mecklenburg Resolves, a document signed a full year before the Declaration of Independence.

In her Genealogy of the Reese Family, Mary Reese relates a tale involving Fighting Charlie and the invading British general, Lord Cornwallis, which says, "... when Cornwallis was quartered at Charlotte [North Carolina, near the Reese farm], he had a very choice horse that he prized very highly, and that Charles Reese captured this horse and ran away with it, and when reprimanded by his brother for such a deed, replied, "All is fair in love and war."

Parker Sams in Fighting Charlie Reese, says that Charlie was wounded in battle, captured at the fall of Charleston, and later fought with Carolina General Thomas Sumter, the "Gamecock."

In his later years, at age 72, Fighting Charlie applied for a Revolutionary War pension in 1828, in addition to a small pension he received due to an injury in the War of 1812, when he was about 56 years old. The years hadn't mellowed his love for fighting.

In between the Revolution and the War of 1812, Fighting Charlie found time for love as well as war. In the book Fighting Charles Reese by Parker Sams, it is noted that Charlie moved freely in what was then the Cherokee country, which consisted of northern Georgia, southeastern Tennessee, part of Alabama and western North Carolina. Mr. Sams cites nineteenth century historian Lyman Draper in that Charles Reese "went among the Cherokees, probably as a trader."

Parker Sams notes that Fighting Charlie was established in Sumner County, Tennessee, by the late 1780's. It was here that he married a Cherokee, and the line began which leads us to Fayetteville and the Razorbacks.

Charlie's Cherokee wife was named Nancy. Mary Reese says that Charlie "married an Indian princess, a daughter of Adair." There is evidence to suggest that they lived in Hiwassee (today in Polk County, Tennessee) where the stores of the area's white people were located. As a trader, it would seem logical that Charlie would be in the center of activity.

Fighting Charlie probably married Indian princess Nancy around 1785. About 1786, their first child was born, a daughter named Susannah Charity Reese.

Around 1800, Susannah got married. Her husband's name was Oo-watie, and he was the brother of the Cherokee tribal leader Major Ridge. Oo-watie adopted the Christian name

David, and shortened the family name simply to "Watie."

Shortly after their marriage, Susannah and David Watie moved from Hiwassee in Tennessee to what is today Gordon County, Georgia. Between 1800 and 1818, they had nine children, but it is the first two sons whom we will follow.

David and Susannah's first son, born in 1803 or 1804, was called Killkeena (though some sources cite it as "Gallegina"). In any case, the boy who was Fighting Charlie's first grandson soon became known simply as "Buck."

Along with Susannah's brother-in-law Major Ridge, many Cherokees believed that knowledge is power. They made sure their children received a good education, often from the Christian missionary schools in the Cherokee Nation as well as a popular school in Cornwall, Connecticut.



Major Ridge

Two things happened at the school in Cornwall. First, Buck's cousin John Ridge, son of Major Ridge, was a handsome eighteen-year-old student there when he met the daughter of the schoolmaster, lovely 14-year-old Sarah Bird Northrup. They fell in love.

John's family objected out of concern for what marrying her, a white woman, would do to his standing in the tribe. Sarah's parents objected



John Ridge signed the Treaty of New Echota.

not because he was an Indian, but because he suffered from a hip injury and they feared for his health. After waiting two years, John and Sarah Ridge were married. As a dubious wedding present, they were the subject of a scathing editorial in a local newspaper, but undaunted, they left New England for John's lovely home in Georgia, where Sarah wore fine clothes and their children received an education from private tutors. They were very happy - until disaster struck.

Secondly, John Ridge's cousin Buck, the grandson of Fighting Charlie Reese, made a stop on his way to the school in Cornwall. Buck visited the noted philanthropist who was president of the American Bible Society, and a member of the Continental Congress, named Elias Boudinot. Obviously impressed, Susannah and David's son Buck decided to honor the gentleman by assuming his name, and was thereafter known as Elias "Buck" Boudinot.



Sarah Bird Northup Ridge

After his schooling in Cornwall, Buck Boudinot returned to the Cherokee capital of New Echota and became editor of *The Phoenix*, the newspaper of the Cherokee nation.

The newspaper was possible because of Cherokee literacy. A Cherokee syllabary, or alphabet, had been devised by a chief named Sequoyah. Originally, the Cherokees had no written language, so Sequoyah set out to create one that could be quickly learned by Cherokee children and adults alike. Some say (and we would like to believe) that during his travels devising the alphabet, he stayed for a while in the town of Fayetteville, Arkansas, on a lovely mountain that ultimately bore his name.

In any case, the Cherokees were literate and had their own newspaper, which was not generally the case among the white settlers. Unfortunately, the Cherokees had something else which the white men did not – gold was discovered on Cherokee land. And so disaster struck.

As tribal leaders, Major Ridge, John Ridge and Buck Boudinot had a horrifying decision to make. President Andrew Jackson demanded that the Cherokees be removed forcibly from their land and escorted at gunpoint by the Army to a land west of the Mississippi, a barren place they called the Indian Territory, later to be Oklahoma.

Signing away Cherokee tribal land was high treason. But John Ridge and Buck Boudinot were educated men, they knew the white man, and they knew it was useless to resist. They understood that if the Cherokee tried to defend their land, they would be slaughtered where they stood. They felt that even though removal was appalling, at least somehow their people might survive. And so, Fighting Charlie's kinsmen Major Ridge, his son John Ridge and their cousin Buck Boudinot signed the Treaty of Removal at New Echota, giving up Cherokee tribal lands, leaving their homes behind and being subjected to forced removal by the U. S. Army.

They did not do so lightly. They knew it was considered treason, and that by signing, they were signing their death warrants. But regardless, they wanted their people to survive. And in 1838, they, like 16,000 other Cherokees, were forced to make their way – some in wagons, most on foot – from Georgia to Oklahoma. One out of four, mostly children, died of illness, cold and starvation along what would be known as the Trail of Tears.

When the piteous group arrived in Oklahoma, they set about building shelters, knowing that white men were living in their comfortable homes back in Georgia. But their suffering was not yet over.

There was great bitterness in many Cherokees for being forced at gunpoint to leave their lands and for the deprivations of the horrible Trail of Tears. And so the stage was set for the final act – vengeance. On June 22, 1839, assassins took the lives of those who signed the treaty – Fighting Charlie's kinsmen

Major Ridge, John Ridge and Buck Boudinot - stabbed and stomped beyond recognition.

John Ridge died a bloody death in the arms of his wife, Sarah. Fearing the assassins would return to take vengeance on their children, she fled with them to a settlement called Fayetteville in Northwest Arkansas.

Along with Mrs. Ridge and her children came their trusted missionary teacher, Miss Sophia Sawyer, a sturdy New Englander who had once faced up to the Georgia State Militia for the "crime" of teaching slave children to read. (It is said that the tiny Miss Sawyer drew herself up to her full height, barely approaching five feet, and told the armed, mounted militiamen that she was not subject to Georgia law because she was in Indian territory, and the Cherokees were too civilized to have such a law!)



*Miss Sophia Sawyer,
Missionary and
Teacher*

According to the Flashback of August, 1971, Mrs. Ridge and Miss Sawyer arrived in Fayetteville on July 1, 1839. The town had been platted in 1835, and the list of purchasers up to 1837 was published in Goodspeed (1889). The Flashback article also notes that local tradition as well as former owners have held that the residence at the corner of Center and Locust was first a log structure before being improved to the large two-story New England-type structure which now stands at 230 West Center. It was first sold by a man named Clark to a Mr. Z.M. Pettigrew and was for a long time known as the Pettigrew House.

After being purchased by Mrs. Ridge in 1840, the building became known as the Ridge House. Not only is it still standing, it is thriving under the loving care of the Washington County Historical Society. Several professional offices are housed in the Ridge House to help maintain the costs of upkeep.

When Mrs. Ridge purchased the structure in 1840, it had

already been listed in the town's official documents since at least 1837. The fact that it is not only surviving but thriving stands as a testament to the spirit of the strong-willed woman who lived there.

Mrs. Ridge made quite a formidable team with Sophia Sawyer, the missionary teacher and fellow New Englander who fled with her to Fayetteville. W. J. Lemke, the distinguished Washington County historian and first editor of the Flashback, is quoted in the August, 1971 issue in that Miss Sawyer is credited as "providing the influence which led to establishment of the University of Arkansas."



*Jonas M. Tebbetts, Attorney
to the Cherokee*

Certainly Miss Sophia Sawyer's Fayetteville Female Seminary came to be regarded as one of the finest schools west of the Mississippi. Girls from good families not only in Arkansas but the entire region were sent to Miss Sawyer's for a superior education.

An interesting sidelight as noted in the August, 1971, Flashback, was that "Mrs. [Jas. Harvey] Stirman was perhaps Mrs. Ridge's closest friend in Fayetteville." In the Journal of Marian Tebbetts Banes, we see that the young Miss Matilda Winlock of Kentucky spent time in Fayetteville with "her cousin,

Mrs. Harvey Stirman, for the purpose of attending Miss Sawyer's School."

A young lawyer named Jonas Tebbetts inquired about Matilda Winlock while she was staying in Fayetteville with the family of Mrs. Ridge's friend, their Stirmans. Jonas and "Miss Mat" were to marry, and raise their own family in what is today known lovingly as the Tebbetts Home or Headquarters House, the headquarters of the Washington County Historical Society.

In fact, Mrs. Tebbetts' own daughter, Marian, records in her

Journal a vivid memory of playing with Alice Ridge and her cousin, Annie Washburn, at the Ridge home - and seeing Mrs. Ridge herself "uncorseted and kind and gentle with the children."

Sarah Ridge, the daughter-in-law of Fighting Charlie's kinsman, Major Ridge, played a significant role in the history of Northwest Arkansas. Her decision to move with Miss Sophia Sawyer to Fayetteville set in motion a singular chain of events. Some believe this led to the establishment of the state's great land-grant university in the little mountain town instead of in Little Rock or another, more accessible place. Certainly the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville became the economic and cultural engine which drove the phenomenon of Northwest Arkansas.

Let's return to the cousin of John Ridge and the grandson of Fighting Charlie Reese, the man who called himself Buck Boudinot. Buck also found that the signing of the Treaty of Removal at New Echota was indeed his death warrant. On June 22, 1839, in the Indian Territory, as he was building a shelter, some Cherokee men approached Boudinot and inquired about some needed medicine. When Buck set off with them to get it, they turned on him, stabbing and bludgeoning him repeatedly. Friends who ran to help him were too late. The men escaped into the woods and Buck Boudinot was dead.

This educated man who edited his people's newspaper, the ironically-named Cherokee Phoenix, was no more. But his legacy lived on in some unexpected ways.

The August, 1971, Flashback, recalls the consternation in Cornwall, Connecticut, caused by the marriage of John and



*Matilda Winlock Tebbetts,
wife of Jonas M. Tebbetts*

Sarah Ridge, "... but it was only a forerunner of the uproar caused when Elias Boudinot, John's cousin, married Harriet Gold two years later in the same place." What with mass hysteria, mob violence and the burning of their effigies - led by Harriet's own brother - that was an understatement (see Flashback, May, 1987, "Do They Ever Speak of Me in Cornwall?")

Buck Boudinot had indeed married. Though Harriett died and was buried in New Echota, his son and namesake, Elias Cornelius Boudinot, followed in his father's distinguished footsteps. For one thing, finding himself in Fayetteville, Arkansas, Elias C. Boudinot became founding editor of the newspaper *Arkansian*, along with J. R. Pettigrew (a coincidence that the house Mrs. Ridge purchased was, as noted by Goodspeed, known for a long time as the Pettigrew House).

In a very brief summation of his illustrious life, the May 2001 Flashback quotes from Campbell's *One Hundred Years of Fayetteville* (1928) in saying: "Elias C. Boudinot, son of Kill-keenah, a Cherokee of royal lineage ... came to Fayetteville in 1856. For a time he was associate editor of the *Fayetteville Arkansian*. He was secretary of the Secession Convention of 1861. At the age of 25 he was made chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee. Espousing the cause of the Confederacy, he rose to Lieutenant Colonel. Before the war, Boudinot was identified with all civic life in Fayetteville, being a Councilman, an incorporator of schools, and seeking the railroad connection to the town ... He was the soul of honor and chivalry, and knew nothing of fear."

Elias C. Boudinot's father Buck had been assassinated along with his uncle, Major Ridge, and cousin John Ridge. In Fayetteville, he sought to care for John's widow, Sarah Ridge. But his letters as well as Mrs. Ridge's reflect their correspondence with a signer of the treaty who was very much alive, Fighting Charlie Reese's other grandson, Stand Watie.

Fighting Charlie's daughter Susannah and her husband David Watie had had another son two years after Buck. Sometimes referred to as "Degadoga" and "Takatoka," he was most commonly referred to as Stand, some said for his tenaciousness.

Stand Watie, born in 1806, did not go to the school in

Cornwall, Connecticut, attended by his brother Buck and cousin John Ridge (and from whence they took their brides). Stand was schooled closer to home at the Brainerd Mission School in Tennessee.

Some say that due to a timely warning from friends, Stand Watie escaped the carnage in which his uncle Major Ridge, cousin John Ridge and brother Buck were slain. As next in line from the ruling family, he managed to hold lofty positions within the Cherokee Nation even while evading those who sought his death. He was a Supreme Court Clerk, a National Council speaker, and principal chief of one of the major Cherokee factions.



*Stand Watie, Cherokee
Leader*

He was also a lawyer, a businessman and a farmer. But the title which would earn him the most fame is reflected in a letter he received from Arkansas dignitaries in May of 1861 addressed to Captain Stand Watie, urging him "as a private and public citizen of the Cherokee Nation to join us in our efforts for mutual defense. ...it is very important that the Cherokees be up and doing to defend their soil, their homes, their firesides, aye, their very existence. To this end, the state of Arkansas and the Confederate Government will also strive and bloodless will not be any victory over us."

And so Stand Watie was recruited to lead the Cherokee Nation in defense of the Confederacy. He and his soldiers fought bravely, both in battles such as Pea Ridge, as well as in guerilla actions. He is remembered as being the last Confederate general in the Civil War to surrender.

Ironically, in 1995 Stand Watie was pictured on a U. S. postage stamp commemorating the Civil War, honored as being

the last general to surrender – honored by the United States which was his enemy in the Civil War, and which had forced him and his Cherokee people from their land in Georgia forever.

In any case, Stand lived a full life, ultimately living to age 65 and finally passing in 1871.

Parker Sams points out a further irony: "An interesting sidelight showing how North Carolinians, and not just Cherokees, took pride in General Stand Watie is found in a friendly dispute between North Carolina and Virginia Confederate veterans in 1904 trying to out-do each other in war glory. One of the North Carolina veterans' rejoinders was 'that the last Confederate general to surrender was General Stand Watie at Doaksville, Oklahoma, the old Choctaw capital, on June 23, 1865.' His mother was Susannah Reese Watie, a Moravian and a descendent of a well-known North Carolina family...." And Susannah was the daughter of Fighting Charlie.

And so we come full circle from Fighting Charlie Reese to the impact he and his descendants had on Northwest Arkansas as well as the United States.

It should be noted that Charles Reese had died in 1830 at about 74 ripe old years of age, in Lincoln County, Tennessee. Parker Sams notes that Fighting Charlie died soon after the 1830 federal census was taken (though there is no evidence that the two events are related.) Sams further states that it is not known where in Lincoln County Charlie was buried, though it was probably on the family farm, a 200-acre tract, and not in a church graveyard, as no record exists of Charlie belonging to a church after the revolution. The passing of Fighting Charlie merited a short obituary on June 24, 1830, in Tennessee's National Banner and Nashville Whig: "Died – in Lincoln Co., Mr. Charles T. Reese, aged 80, a veteran of the Revolution." Though apparently the newspaper got his age wrong, Fighting Charlie was given his due as a fighter and a patriot.

But there was one last bequest from Fighting Charlie to Northwest Arkansas and the world. Tradition has it that in 1910, the University of Arkansas football team, then called the 'Cardinals,' made the arduous trek down to Texas to take on the Longhorns in a contest no one thought Arkansas could win. However, even after the exhausting train ride to the heart of the

Lone Star state, the Arkansas team managed to beat the Longhorns in an unbelievable win.

The great news of the win was telegraphed back to Fayetteville, where most of the town turned out to cheer the return of the victorious athletes at the Dickson Street train station. Amid the joyful noise, Coach Hugo Bezdek hollered to the festive crowds that they won because, "These boys fought like a band of wild Razorback hogs!" The team's name was changed and an athletic dynasty was born.

The exultant scene for the Fighting Razorbacks took place at the train station in a town where his own great-grandson, Elias C. Boudinot, had helped bring the railroad. That would have made it even sweeter. No doubt Fighting Charlie would have been proud.

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Mary E. Reese: *Genealogy of the Reese Family* (1903)

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Marian Tebbetts Banes, *The Journal of Marian Tebbetts Banes* (WCHS, 2002)

Washington County Historical Society: *Flashback* (August, 1971 and May, 2001)

Very Special Thanks to Charles Stewart.



Current members of the Twentieth Century Club
Bottom Row (l to r) - Karen Byers, Libby Wheeler, Sue Condren
Middle Row (l to r) - Martha Middleton, Phyllis Eddins,
Carolyn Smart, Carolyn Banks, Wanda Belzung
Upper Middle Row (l to r) - Marion Wyckoff, Doris Cordes,
Carolyn DeLille, Jackie Starling, Jackie Kellogg
Back Row - Barbara Taylor, Sandy Edwards, Dorothy Reddig,
Mary Ellen Moore, Martha Brewer, Yvonne Gyles,
Barbara Singleton,
(Not pictured are Marian Catron, Mary John Jones, Melanie
Stockdell and inactive members Marcella Grider, Lois Imhoff,
Mary Frances Newbern.)

The Twentieth Century Club

By Libby Wheeler

The Twentieth Century Club of Fayetteville is celebrating its 90th anniversary this year. Organized in 1912, it was Fayetteville's first women's book study club and was part of the proliferation of women's clubs that sprang up all over the United States at the end of the nineteenth century.

Compared to other Arkansas towns, Fayetteville was late in having a literary club as well as a public library. Before 1900, there were 12 women's book groups in Arkansas that were not only active, but had already established public libraries in their towns. One of these towns was Searcy, where Mrs. Richard B.

Willis, a Presbyterian minister's wife originally from Virginia, had founded and served as principal for 18 years of the exclusive Searcy Institute for Young Women. When she and her husband arrived in Fayetteville, Mrs. Willis was shocked that the home of the University did not have a book club. So she founded one and served as its first president from 1912-1916. Mrs. Willis' daughter was Mrs. Francis Humphreys; her granddaughter, Mrs. James E. Pomfret, both familiar names on the University of Arkansas campus.

Joining Mrs. Willis in founding the Club were Mrs. Charles Appleby, Mrs. Homer Pearson, and Mrs. Lessie Stringfellow Read. An attractive speech teacher from Ohio, Miss Lorie Huey met her future husband, Charles Appleby, on a visit to Fayetteville to see her parents. He was a pioneer in the canning business in Northwest Arkansas and president of the Rotary and Chamber of Commerce. In the 1920's the Applebys bought and restored the Tebbetts' house, now the Headquarters House. Club meetings have always been held in members' homes, and many memorable gatherings took place at this historic site.

Mrs. Homer Pearson, a native of Sulphur Springs in Benton County, had a keen interest in books and literature. She was a Sunday school teacher for 50 years at First Baptist Church in Fayetteville and organized the Evergreen Cemetery Association. The Washington County Historical Society awarded her husband, a trusted and respected practicing attorney, its Distinguished Citizen citation. Childless, the Pearsons adopted a pre-school age boy when the Orphan Train passed through Fayetteville.

Mrs. Lessie Stringfellow Read, a native of Texas, was for many years the managing editor and "Round About Town" columnist of the Daily Democrat, precursor to the Northwest Arkansas Times. She was a book lover and had a considerable collection of beautiful and choice books, many autographed. Mrs. Read was very active in the General Federation of Women's Clubs, serving as national chair for press and publicity. All four founders of the Twentieth Century Club died in Fayetteville and are buried in Evergreen Cemetery.

Eight charter members joined the founders for the first study group meeting on September 20, 1912. Notable among these

were Miss Florida Read, an early librarian who belonged to the Club for 68 years, and Mrs. C. H. Brough, whose husband would be elected governor in 1916.

The Club's colors are pink, white and green, which are the colors of its flower, the apple blossom, so important in Northwest Arkansas in the early twentieth century. *Esse quam videri*, "to be rather than to seem" is the Club's motto. Club founders took themselves seriously, valuing reality over appearance; intellectual discourse over its semblance. The motto also reflects members' desires to be intellectually self-fulfilled while not appearing to step outside the boundaries set for wives and mothers who were, in the early twentieth century, to put family before all else, including self.

The purpose of the Club as stated in the constitution is "literary study and some altruistic work." During its early years, the club was federated with the Arkansas Federation of Women's Clubs and the General Federation. In 1930, however, the Club withdrew, deciding it was a study group foremost and did not want to participate in the activist agenda of the Federation. The Club's primary altruistic work has always been the Fayetteville Library.

Early Club meetings were serious affairs, with all members reading the books under study and responsible for assigned reports at the twice monthly meetings of the school year. The leader could question members on the readings, and Mrs. Willis, a teacher, often asked the questions. The program for the year was prepared by a committee and printed in yearbooks, many of which still survive. Classical works predominated; fiction was tolerated, and travelogues were forbidden. Roll call was often answered with some fact or quote related to the program of the day. Until 1924 there was a club critic, who once reprimanded members for talking during the study hour and suggested that they be "more original in appraising books, relying less on professional critics."

The Fayetteville Library ordered (wholesale) the books for study for the year – just one copy of each book, which was kept on the Twentieth Century shelf at the library. Private copies and books from the University Library were also used, and there were supposed to be at least two copies available for any book

studied. The Club paid for the books ordered by the library with not infrequent personal assessments and dues, and then donated the books to the library. Since all members had to read the books, it took careful management and planning, and each lesson leader had to have the lesson questions on her book ready for distribution at the first meeting in September.

Meetings could be lengthy. Club minutes of February 20, 1920, report the following occurred - (1) members voted to endorse Mrs. Troupe in her efforts to reduce the cost of living (2) Mrs. Flowers led the lesson on Flaubert's *Salambo* (3) Mrs. Jordan discussed Rostand's play, *l'Aiglon* and (4) Dr. Hancock, invited speaker, read a paper on the early history of Carthage. Mrs. Vincenheller, a member of the Club for many years who spoke at its 50th anniversary celebration, wondered what time these women got home!

Members of the Club were described as "women of high character, average ability and endowed with a love of books." There were no refreshments and little socializing at early meetings, but tea began to be served from time to time, and it was noted in the 1932 minutes that serving tea "is said to be against club rules - but it is never against club feelings."

Dues were \$1.00 and were augmented by fines: \$.05 for tardiness, \$.25 for unexcused absences, and \$1.00 for failure to perform assigned duties. A Club meeting was not to be taken lightly, and those fined were listed in the minutes.

Interesting comments on a few of the books read in the early period of the Club are found in the minutes:

- In February 1929 a discussion was held on the progress of the "colored race" in recent years. Selections were read from *Ozark Ballads* by George Ballard, a respected Negro of Fayetteville. Publication of this little volume was fostered by Lessie Stringfellow Read. It was printed and sold by the Times Publishing Company, with some profit to the author.

- In April 1933 the secretary, Mrs. Cravens, noted after a discussion of Philip Barry's *Animal Kingdom* that one Club member wondered "why so often our brilliant play writers debase their talents on themes involving that everlasting triangle of sex, and that horrid thing 'companionate marriage.' Our Club at large holds the belief that equally fine and decent

plays can be made equally popular and profitable. We here go on record protesting against the necessity of introducing into the gay entertainment now commonly offered us and our young people – so much that is lewd and low."

To illustrate that not all was serious at the early meetings, Mrs. Vincenheller related at the 50th anniversary luncheon of the Club the worst conduct that ever happened during a review. The book under analysis concerned the career of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. Another member nudged Mrs. Vincenheller and pointed across the room toward a member whose shoes were on the wrong feet. An uncontrollable fit of giggles followed and continued throughout the meeting.

Over the years, rules have become relaxed and meetings less frequent, now monthly during the school year. By the 1950's, reviewers began to choose their own books, at first with the approval of the program committee, and then without. Members are no longer required to read each book and participate in the lesson, although lively discussion usually follows each review. Leader's selections are eclectic, with biography and history the favorites.

Club minutes of the last half-century are more detailed and reveal several noteworthy programs:

- In 1954 Jan Fowler reviewed Ruth Moore's *Man, Time and Fossils* and Darwin's *The Beagle Diary*. The discussion was so heated that Mrs. Fowler had to remind the group that she was not teaching evolution, only reviewing books!

- Also in 1954 the ban against travelogues was broken when Mattie Cal Maxted gave an account of her European travels. The minutes record that she began her talk by passing around the bottle of Yardley's smelling salts that Club member Mrs. Miley gave her to take on her trip. She told how the bottle of salts "revived her when she passed out on the Jungfrau and how it became as important as the guide to herself and those around her in stuffy places, or when fatigue overcame them." Mrs. Maxted lectured on social welfare at Oxford University for two weeks before her extensive travel.

- In 1970 when Arkansas was in one of its attempts to write a new constitution, a review was given of Catherine Bowen's book, *Miracle of Philadelphia*, which the secretary noted was very timely indeed.

- And in 1992 when Bess Dulan was ill, her husband, a University of Arkansas economics professor, took her place and lectured on Inflation, a Worldwide Disaster.

Members' broad interests have prompted modest contributions to various causes over the years, including the Foundation for the International Exchange of Students, the Ozark Society, The Washington County Historical Society and KUAF. But the Fayetteville Public Library has always been the Club's altruistic focus. Club members were influential in organizing the library. In early 1916, member Julia Vaulx, the University librarian, called together a group of women, whose "enthusiastic planning and tireless work" resulted in the library's opening in two rooms of the courthouse in June. Eight of the 11 members of this organizing group belonged to the Twentieth Century Club; five of the six permanent library committee were Club members. Charter member Miss Florida Read served as the first paid librarian on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday afternoons for \$15 a month, faithfully discharging her duties without taking time off for vacations. Gifts of books and monies came from the community, and there were door to door canvasses. Fundraisers to keep the library afloat were continuous. The Twentieth Century Club helped fill a boxcar with old newspapers to earn \$25 for the library, and members were active in other fundraisers, including a game night at the Ozark Club. Indicated in the first surviving minutes of the Twentieth Century (1919) is the annual library pledge of \$25, which continues to this day.

More recently, the Twentieth Century has supported the library through memorial books and books to honor longstanding members who move away. With the opening of the new Roberta Fulbright Library in 1962, the Club, after much discussion, decided to donate 260 slides of birds, wild flowers, small mammals, snakes, amphibians and insects found in Arkansas. Many of these were reproduced from private collections. Also included were a recording of bird calls, a slide sorter and special boxes to keep the slides in cataloged order. The collection was added to in succeeding years. To fund this contribution, the Club held a silver tea in March 1963, and Dr. Ed Dale of the University of Arkansas' Department of Botany

showed slides. In 1964 the Library honored the Twentieth Century Club by putting its name on a plaque as being a \$250 donor to the book endowment fund. The Club continued its support with a \$500 contribution in 1991 to the library's expansion fund. And, with the impending new library, a new project needs consideration.

After 90 years, the Twentieth Century Club has 23 active members who, to quote an early and longtime member, Mrs. Miriam Vincenheller, "continue to learn something from books, and from each other, with a little extra thrown in for fun." The Club's records will soon reside in the Special Collections of Mullins Library at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

Sources for this essay are foremost the surviving yearbooks and minutes of the Twentieth Century Club and recollections of members, especially those of Mrs. Miriam Vincenheller. Also used were Fayetteville newspapers; Evergreen Cemetery records; history of the Fayetteville Library archive file at the Roberta Fulbright Library; interview with longtime Fayetteville resident, Mary Lucille Yoe; several collections in the Special Collections Division, Mullins Library, University of Arkansas; historical accounts of Fayetteville; Marilyn J. Martin's 1992 thesis, "From Altruism to Activism: Women's Literary Clubs and Public Libraries in Arkansas;" Theodora Penn Martin, *The Sound of Our Own Voices: Women's Study Clubs, 1860-1910* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987); and Mrs. Frederick Hanger and Clara B. Eno, *History of the Arkansas Federation of Women's Clubs, 1897-1934* (Van Buren, AR: Press-Argus Printers, 1935). The author thanks Twentieth Century Club members Barbara Taylor and Marion Wycoff for their assistance.

The Great Great Great Granddaughter Of a Blue and a Gray

An Anecdote of our Family History

By Blair G. Mills

On August 12, 1862, a 21-year-old LeClaire, Iowa, farmer, George Leamer, answered President Lincoln's call for 300,000

more Union Army troops.

After training in St. Louis and marching through Missouri, on December 7, 1862, his Iowa 20th Unit passed through Fayetteville, Arkansas, "at half past eight o'clock a.m., halting one mile beyond, where we prepared to cook breakfast," as it was reported by Captain C. Barney, in his "Recollections of Field Service with the Twentieth Iowa Volunteers, or What I Saw in the Army."

They were engaged in the Battle of Prairie Grove shortly thereafter on the same day.

After the war, George returned to farming in eastern Iowa. His children and grandchildren stayed in the same area.

However, the mobility of our society in the mid-20th Century caught up with the next generation. (The author is his great grandson.) After several career-related moves in Illinois, Nebraska and Florida, the Mills family was transferred to Little Rock, where daughter Denise matriculated to Fayetteville to attend the University.

It was there that Denise Mills, George's great, great granddaughter, met Tim Luft. They married, and Leslie Mills Luft was born to them at Washington Regional Medical Center on September 30, 1992. The Medical Center is located directly on the path of the Civil War march of the 20th Iowa unit on December 7, 1862.



George Leamer

Isn't it ironic that 67 days short of 130 years after George Leamer marched from Pea Ridge through Fayetteville to do battle in that ugly confrontation, that his beautiful great, great, great granddaughter was born directly on the path of his march. A Yank and Reb, a Blue and a Gray - but with a common bloodline.

Note: While not necessarily germane to the basic story, the narrative by Captain Barney of activities immediately after the breakfast on the morning of December 7, 1862, is interesting:

"After passing through Fayetteville, we halted and stacked our arms near the roadside. Our wagons coming up at the same time, after kindling fires on which to boil our coffee, we repaired to our mess chests on the wagons for the purpose of procuring rations. The road on which we were halted was a branch of the one leading to Van Buren, but running due south from Fayetteville to Cane Hill - 19 miles distant. In front of us on the east and some two miles away, was a spur of the Boston Mountains, running nearly north and south - at the base of which was the Illinois Creek. On the summit of the hill in our front, a large number of cavalry were seen, quietly sitting on their horses, who seemed to be observing us. At the time no particular attention was paid to them, as we supposed they were men of our own command; but subsequently we ascertained they were a detachment of Hindman's army, holding our movements under observation. No intimations of the approaching battle had as yet been received. The morning was calm and beautiful; not a cloud obscured the sun, which had already risen above the treetops, and the day promised to be one peculiar to this section of the south, where at that season of the year the weather is a compromise between winter and summer.

While in the act of searching our mess boxes, we were suddenly startled by heavy discharges of artillery apparently but a short distance from us on the Cane Hill road. For a moment our motions were suspended in amazement, and men looked in their comrades' faces with blank astonishment. This surprise, however, passed almost as soon as felt, and each man throwing down whatever rations were in his hand, sprang to his rifle. Orders were then given to 'load at will, right face,' and I presume 'forward march' followed, as we found ourselves

immediately moving in 'quick time' on the road leading to Cane Hill, and listening intently to the roar of artillery, mingled with small arms, some distance in advance."

Lilburn Franklin Cox

(The following brief account of Lilburn Franklin Cox was submitted by his granddaughter, Ms. Mamie Cox-Parker of Oklahoma City, a long-time member of the Washington County Historical Society.

Lilburn Franklin Cox was born on March 18, 1884, in Sullivan County, Tennessee, to Jacob B. Cox and Elizabeth Webb-Cox of Irish descent. He was an ancestor of Lieutenant Edward Cox of Maryland and East Tennessee, who served during the Revolutionary War.

The Cox family came by steamboat from East Tennessee to Washington County, Arkansas, in the late 1840s.

Franklin farmed with his parents in the Rieff Chapel community. Franklin, age 21 and single, enlisted in the First Arkansas Union Light Artillery, First Battery, on February 23, 1862, at Fayetteville. He served for three years in the Union Army.

Franklin married Penelope Elizabeth Marrs, age 14, of Prairie Grove, Arkansas. Elizabeth was the eldest daughter of the seven orphan children of Andrew Buchanan Marrs and Winney Carter Marrs of the Marrs Hills community near Prairie Grove. Andrew Marrs died in 1865 of pneumonia while home on furlough from the Civil War.

Franklin and Elizabeth were married on December 22, 1867. They were the parents of nine children. Three generations of the Cox family lived on Jacob Cox's homestead farm, which was located five miles southwest of Fayetteville, between 1849 and 1919.

Franklin and Elizabeth sold the Cox farm and moved to Gravette, Arkansas, in Benton County, in 1919. In the city cemetery in Gravette, the tall white granite stone reads:

"L. Franklin Cox	March 1841 - September 1922
P. Elizabeth Marrs-Cox	April 1853 - June 1944

THERE ARE NO PARTINGS IN HEAVEN."

A Little Irish Cricket

By Mrs. Bobby G. Wilson

Many local readers who were dating in the 1940s and 1950s, and who went to Springdale's Jackson's Café after the movies or who paid the sparkely cashier at the area Holiday Inns, already know who this article is about. This unforgettable character, was fondly known as "Cricket."

Lylah Jane Little was born January 22, 1899, at Belfast, Ireland, to James and Annie Little. She lived in Northern Ireland, which was Protestant. Her impish smile did not reflect the sadness of her early life. Her father died before she was born, her mother when she was an infant, and she spent her childhood in Irish and English orphanages, had a very meager life, and little to eat. One of her many foster homes was with an English doctor's family. At 17 or 18, she emigrated to Toronto, Canada, with other people. Before long she moved to Michigan, where she married at 19, but her first husband died three years later of tuberculosis.

Cricket worked in a factory, was a waitress, and for a short while was a professional dancer. In 1927 she married Seba William "Jack" Jackson, born September 7, 1898, in Tama County, Iowa, who was part German. They moved to Butler, Missouri, then to Tulsa, Oklahoma, where there were blessed with their only child, Doris Jayne. In 1936, they moved to Fayetteville, Arkansas, where they opened "Jackson's Chilie Parlor" on the square.

Together, in 1948, the opened "Jackson's Café" on South Thompson Street (Highway 71) in Springdale, before the days of "fast food" chains. (The Silk Road is there now.) At that time, Thompson Street was only two lanes, and across the street from them, cattle grazed among the billboards in the pasture of the Charlesworth farm. This was before the nearby East Sunset Street was opened to the railroad tracks. Jack cooked, probably with kitchen help. Cricket warmly welcomed diners with her

twinkling eyes and cheerful smiles, took food orders, and frequently shared amusing jokes and laughter with the patrons. She was four feet 10 - inches tall, and was still tiny even with her hair piled high atop her head. A slight brogue remained in her speech, and she used her "lilting Irish laughter" often. Their café was a popular hangout for dating couples, where everybody felt welcome, and frequently lingered on after the food was consumed to enjoy her company. Jack and Cricket sponsored her nephew, Tommy Johnston from Ireland, who now lives in Bella Vista.

Days leading up to St. Patrick's Day were especially festive. She decorated the café fittingly for that special occasion, even tinting the water green. In 1954 Cricket enjoyed a month long trip to "the Emerald Isle," revisiting the scenes of her youth, and her two sisters. It was an unforgettable trip, but she was glad to get home to her family and friends,

as well as the modern conveniences in America. After many years in their successful business, they decided it was time to retire, and sold the café. Jack died suddenly on May 10, 1962, ending their 35 eventful years of marriage, and he was buried at Springdale's Bluff Cemetery.

Always with a positive outlook, Cricket learned to drive a car after Jack died. She hadn't been working for some time,



Cricket Jackson

when she enjoyed a meal at the Fayetteville Holiday Inn on College Avenue. After waiting a while to pay at the cash register, and seeing how disorganized they seemed to be, she cheerfully remarked, "You could use a cashier." The surprising answer she got was, "Would you like a job?" She loved being around people, took the job, and was a one person "goodwill ambassador" there for several years. After that, she became cashier at Springdale's Holiday Inn for a number of years.

Many may have recognized Cricket in a bit part in the television mini-series, "The Blue and the Gray," which was filmed at locations around northwest Arkansas in 1982. At the age of 83, she played the role of a bedfast elderly lady, while the Civil War raged noisily outside. (This scene was filmed at the two-story frame Borden House at the Prairie Grove Battlefield Park. A fake addition was built onto the house, which was "blown off" from the movie.) After the close-up of her in the upstairs bedroom, loud cannon fire was heard, and the explosion "hit" the house. The last sight was of her lying crumpled on the ground, splattered with fake blood. Still the "life of the party," Cricket danced an Irish jig at the Rap Party when the film was finished. She was written up in the "Arkansas Gazette" and appeared on the "Entertainment Tonight" television show.

Their daughter Doris Jayne, an R.N., first married Dwain Newman, who later founded National Lumber in Springdale. They had Michael Dwain (deceased), Kristy Kay "Krocket," and Jeff Newman. Dorris Jayne Gilbert now lives in Grand Prairie, Texas, and continues the Irish traditions in memory of her special mother. She uses some of her mother's keepsake decorations at home and does special Irish decorations for the occasion for organizations she is a member of.

In her final years, Cricket moved into a Senior Citizen's Center at St. Louis, near where her daughter lived. A member of the First Christian Church, she died February 10, 1996, at age 97, and was brought back to Springdale for burial beside Jack.

Never losing her sense of humor, one of her favorite benedictions was, "May you be in heaven half an hour before the devil knows you're dead." Her favorite blessing ends, "Until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand." The

song "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" could truly have been written with Cricket in mind, and it was sung at her funeral. After knowing this little Irish Cricket, St. Patrick's Day will always evoke very special memories.

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